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The Common Cause

OF HUMANITY.

The Organ of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies.

LAW-ABIDING.] ***Societies and Branches in the Union Etc.*** [NON-PARTY.

VOL. VIII., No. 409.] FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1917. [PRICE 1D.
Registered as a Newspaper.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Press Comments on the Speaker's Conference Report	574
The Deportation of Women and Girls in France, Belgium and Serbia	576
Correspondence. Proportional Representation; The Enfranchisement of Irish Women	577
A Step Forward. By Mrs. Fawcett	578
The Millicent Fawcett Hospital Units for Refugees in Russia	579

[The National Union does not hold itself responsible for opinions expressed in signed articles.]

Notes and News.

The King's Speech.

On February 7th, Parliament was opened by the King in person. His Majesty's speech dealt with but one subject, the prosecution of the war, and an allusion to the forthcoming Imperial Conference was made only with regard to "important questions of common interest relating to the war," with the hope expressed of the establishment of closer relations between all parts of the Empire. It is greatly to be hoped that with the linking-up of the Commonwealths, the vital necessity that *all* citizens of the Empire should assume the full responsibilities of their citizenship will be as apparent here as it has already been to the Dominions.

Age and the Franchise.

What would be the effect upon the electorate if the recommendations of the Speaker's Conference as to the franchise should be adopted as they stand?

One effect, says Mr. W. H. Dickinson, M.P., in *The Nation*, would be an increase of 25 per cent. in the male electorate, largely among the poorer and less educated classes, for they have been affected most of all by the long term of residential qualification hitherto required. Altogether there are about twelve million men in the United Kingdom.

There are at present upon the register about 8,000,000 men voters.

If the recommendations are carried out, there will be between 10,000,000 and 11,000,000.

If the vote were conferred upon all women over twenty-one upon the same system, the female electors, Mr. Dickinson thinks, might number as many as 12,000,000 out of the fourteen millions of adult women.

The effect of the various age restrictions upon the number of women to be enfranchised can, of course, only be approximately and very roughly estimated.

Taken at the age of thirty and over, there are more than ten million women in the United Kingdom, and on this basis, without further restriction, Mr. Dickinson considers there would be about 9,000,000 women voters.

We may bear in mind that the proportion of married women is, of course, highest between twenty-five and thirty-five years of age, and this, perhaps, accounts for the high estimate of nine out of ten.

The Conference have therefore proposed a further "limitation by qualification," that the woman-voter should be the occupier of premises, either as tenant or wife of a tenant; the lodger and the daughter living at home seem to be largely excluded, unless they can prove tenancy. Under this scheme it is thought that some 6,000,000 voters will be admitted to the Parliamentary franchise.

Englishwomen at a Disadvantage.

If women are enfranchised on the basis of the present Local Government Register, Englishwomen will be placed at a considerable disadvantage compared with Scottish women. In Scotland women may vote for all Local Government bodies on exactly the same terms as men; that is to say, as occupiers, owners, lodgers, or as service voters. In England, women can only vote as occupiers, and in the case of County Councils (with the exception of London) and Town Councils, most revising barristers put on the Register only unmarried women and widows.

National Service for Women.

At the National Service Meeting at the Central Hall, Westminster, on February 6th, Mr. Neville Chamberlain explained why he was not at present calling upon women to volunteer. He had been hotly criticised because it was thought that he wanted to leave women out of the scheme of National Service, but the Prime Minister would bear him out that he had never from the very first had any intention of doing so. But the substitution of women in many occupations was a more difficult and delicate operation than substituting men for men. Agreements had to be made as to wages, and there were questions of housing, and so on, to consider. It would have caused great irritation and annoyance if women had been called upon to volunteer and had then found nothing ready for them. Careful investigations were being carried out, and when the appeal to women was issued, it would be made with the knowledge that when they volunteered there would be work for them to do.

He had appointed Mrs. Tennant and Miss Violet Markham as Directors of Women's National Service, and they did not intend to neglect any of the organisations that had been giving valuable assistance in the past. They hoped that they would be able to make use of the services which millions of patriotic women were burning to offer. Their work would be all the more valuable because it had been planned out in advance.

Mr. Henderson, in his introductory speech as Chairman of the meeting, urged the need for making an increased number of men and women available at once for work of national importance. The whole of the able-bodied population must be utilised, irrespective of class or sex. The sources of labour supply would only be satisfactory when every able-bodied man not in the army or navy, and every woman physically fit and available, were enrolled for work of national importance. Mr. Lloyd George also touched on the need for women's co-operation.

Miss Markham, in a statement to representatives of the Press, enlarges somewhat on Mr. Chamberlain's explanation at the National Service meeting with regard to the utilisation of women's services. One decision has been made already, she explains. No appeal will be issued for women workers except in relation to an expressed and immediate demand. If, for example, the Director-General wants 10,000 women for munitions, the need will immediately be made known, for there will be

no general appeal for volunteers. Women, she declares, are tired of filling up forms and registering themselves for war work for which they may not be wanted. It will be the aim of the department to prevent the disappointment which has so often come to women willing to work. Already offers of help of all kinds are flowing in, with regard to which the following statement has been issued officially :—

"Many offers of individual service from women have been received by the Director-General of National Service since the announcement made on Thursday that a Women's Department was in process of formation. Much enthusiasm has been shown in the national cause, and many enquiries made. In order, however, to avoid misunderstanding and disappointment, Mrs. Tennant, Director of the Woman's Department, wishes to make it known that individual offers of service should not be registered at present at St. Ermin's Hotel, except in connection with the clerical staff of the department.

"It is proposed to organise the National Service of women strictly in relation to an ascertained demand, and it would greatly facilitate the work if offers of service could be held over till the plans of the Director-General are more fully developed. Arrangements to this end will be set on foot with all possible expedition, but in the meantime volunteers cannot be enrolled or drafted. Mrs. Tennant particularly hopes that no woman already occupied will leave her existing work, paid or voluntary, until a definite announcement is made by the department as to the lines of future development. Mrs. Tennant and Miss Markham much regret that it has been impossible for them to receive personally the large number of visitors who have called at St. Ermin's, but notes have been made of suggestions and recommendations."

An Appeal to the Women of all Countries.

On page 576 we publish a letter received from Mme. de Witt Schlumberger, enclosing a protest which will appeal to every woman throughout the civilised world. Evidence has been received, which is borne out by information from other sources, that "by Order," issued from the invading authorities, large numbers of the young girls and women of Lille have been dragged from their beds in the middle of the night, herded in the streets, which were commanded by machine-guns, and compelled, with a revolver held at their heads, to sign a form of declaration that they left their homes "voluntarily." Only those whose relations could pay an extortionate ransom for them could be rescued from their fate, the rest were assigned to German officers and soldiers. It is enough to say that those who are allowed to return are broken down in health or have become insane from the treatment to which they have been subjected. From Poland, Belgium, the Baltic Provinces, and Serbia come similar stories, too numerous and too well-authenticated to be ignored, of horrors deliberately organised by the German military authorities. It is the systematic carrying out of hideous reprisals upon helpless victims of the war which calls for indignant protest from the men and women of every nation on earth, whether Allied or neutral. Nor can we bring ourselves to believe that the women of Germany and Austria, if these outrages were brought to their knowledge, would not emphatically join in condemning them and the atrocious policy of moral and physical torture in which they originate.

The Report of the Speaker's Conference.

PRESS COMMENTS.

The news of the recommendation of the inclusion of Women's Suffrage in the scheme of electoral reform, has been welcomed, with scarcely an exception, by the entire Press. A number of papers, with *The Manchester Guardian* and *The Daily News*, rejoice that the principle of Women's Suffrage has been accepted, while criticising the scheme in detail; others are anxious that among Suffragists there should be no dissensions, which enemies of Women's Enfranchisement would at once seek to turn to account.

The Principle Clearly Admitted.

The Manchester Guardian, January 31st.—"By far the most important changes recommended in the Report are those of proportional representation and of Women Suffrage; the first carried unanimously, the second by a majority. . . .

"It could hardly be expected that the proposal to extend the franchise to women should be carried unanimously in a Committee constituted as this Committee was, or perhaps in any Committee of thirty impartially chosen. But the majority in favour of it is believed to have been considerable, and since it would now be hopeless to pass any Franchise Bill from which women were excluded, the fact that opinion in the Committee on this, as on one or two other points of less importance, was not unanimous, need not be regarded as imperilling the prospects of the reform. The proposal of the Committee is at once adequate in principle, and prudent in substance. The difficulty, which, it must be admitted, is a real if not a very formidable one, that if women were enfranchised on the same terms as men they would constitute a considerable majority of the electorate, is met by fixing the age of qualification for women considerably higher than that for men. The Report does not specify the age, but says that thirty or thirty-five were the ages which found most favour. We should certainly think it hard on a woman if she had to reach middle life before she were allowed to exercise a right which has been admitted to be hers, especially as women mature more rapidly than men; but probably no one would grumble very much at the earlier age limit, and the most hardened Suffragists would be the first to rejoice that the battle of principle had been won.

"The effect on the number of women voters would probably be to reduce them to about 4,000,000, or just about half the number of the men now on the register. . . . No, we shall not grumble; rather we shall throw up our caps and rejoice that at last the spirit of liberty has spread wide her wings, and that the nation has called to her support, and to a share in her councils, that great body of her children whom in war she has found at least daring and efficient, and whom in peace also she will soon learn to value and to trust."

The Daily News, January 31st.—"Women's Suffrage, assuming the Report to be accepted, is an accomplished fact. The system proposed is one that cannot stand, for it differentiates obviously against single women, among whom are some of the most earnest and best-qualified politicians of their sex. The barriers set up are in the highest degree artificial, and seem almost erected deliberately to invite attack. But those are trifles compared with the admission of the principle of Women's Suffrage; and the principle is clearly admitted, and can never again become matter of controversy. The reservations are probably due to a natural reluctance to create without trial an electorate in which the women's vote would preponderate."

Appeal for Unanimity among Suffragists.

The Daily Chronicle, February 1st.—"There remains the unsettled matter of the Women's Suffrage. It must be arranged, or the rest will be shipwrecked. The Conference could not arrange it, because certain of its members were against Women's Suffrage on any conditions. They are fully entitled to their view; but we do not believe that, after the demonstration of women's patriotism and women's capacity which the war has afforded, it will be shared by a majority in either House of Parliament. The chief difficulty, as always, will be to find a compromise between the oppositions of rival schools of Suffragists. That proposed by the majority of the Conference is not a bad one, apart from the suggested age-limits. The most serious objection, to which believers in complete enfranchisement, like ourselves, must make some concession, is that of numbers. Before the war the women in the country outnumbered the men. After the war they will still more heavily outnumber them. It may be not unfairly argued that, even apart from the sex difference, it is rash to create at one stroke an electorate of which the majority will never have voted before. There are, of course, many possible ways of deferring to this objection; but it ought not to be impracticable to reach a concordat on some one of them."

The Westminster Gazette (January 31st) gives a few words of advice to "irreconcilables" against rejecting the proposals of the Conference with scorn because they do not go far enough. "We hope before rushing to this conclusion they will ask themselves whether they can reasonably expect that we should at one leap pass from having no women enfranchised to placing a majority of women on the Register; whether, if some means must be found of mitigating this result, any better means can be found than the Conference proposes. It would be a thousand pities if this scheme, and the prospect of getting with it a substantial beginning of Woman Franchise, were wrecked by an irreconcilable demand for 'all or nothing.'"

The Daily Telegraph, February 1st.—"The question of Woman's Suffrage was the single subject where agreement was found impossible. That was a foregone conclusion from the start, but by a majority—it is not stated how large—the Conference decided that 'some measure of Woman's Suffrage should be conferred,' and that the most practical form it could take would be to give the Parliamentary vote to any woman on the Local Government register, or the wife of any man on that register, on attaining a specified age. 'Various ages,' it is added, 'were discussed, of which thirty and thirty-five received most favour.' It is not to be expected that this way of leaving the question will satisfy those zealous Suffragists who claim equality of treatment in every respect with men. But just as little will it satisfy the eager anti-Suffragists who are opposed to any concession whatsoever. Either party possibly has it in its power to wreck the whole proposals of the Conference, and it is much to be hoped that the caution with which this explosive problem has been handled by the Conference may be imitated on all sides until the matter comes before Parliament, as it will do in a shape which holds out a much better chance of success for the Woman Suffragists than any yet presented to the House of Commons."

"The Value of Their Help."

The Times, February 1st.—"For our own part, as we have said before, we have always regarded Woman Suffrage as one of the changes which are inherent in the circumstances of the war, though these circumstances are far too seldom understood or expressed. Nothing, for instance, could be more insulting to the patriotism of women than the suggestion, which is often put forward, that the vote is a fitting 'reward' for war-time work. Good work is its own reward. The real case for their enfranchisement in these days rests on the palpable injustice of leaving the women, who have become for the first time an essential factor in the national effort, to fight their industrial battles hereafter without such help as the vote provides. It is far less valuable, we are afraid, than many of them suppose, but it is something. And their case rests, further, on the value of their help in maintaining those far-reaching social reforms—in such matters as drink control, child welfare, education, and housing schemes—which the war has already brought about as emergency measures.

"We doubt very much whether there is any great hostility left in this country to the principle of Woman Suffrage. Its advocates are almost forcing an open door. The practical problem is to devise a form of franchise which will as far as possible meet with general consent. In this connection we notice that another 'majority' recommendation of the Speaker's Committee raises the question of the disqualification of electors. Women, no less than men, will probably agree that the broader the basis of the franchise, the stricter should be the rules of exclusion for failure in good citizenship. There is no hope in attempting to limit the vote to those who really appreciate its responsibilities, but we have at least an opportunity to raise the barrier against those who have been guilty of flagrant offences against society."

"Not a Dangerous Compromise."

The Nation, February 3rd.—"The Speaker's Conference on Electoral Reform has done its work well, and the gain of so large a charter won by unanimous agreement is immeasurable. To get by consent what is virtually manhood suffrage, a large instalment of proportional representation, redistribution with equal constituencies, and the reduction of the cost of elections, at the price of the survival of a remnant of dual (not plural) voting and the graduate's vote, is an immense progressive advance. Nor have we any reason to be disappointed that the biggest advance of all, the adoption of Woman Suffrage, was recommended only by a majority (a large majority, it is said). The Conference was composed about equally of Suffragists and former opponents, and the majority reflects the recent conversions. No Suffragist likes the proposal to enfranchise women only at thirty or thirty-five on its merits. The latter age can hardly be seriously contemplated. It means the exclusion of great numbers of those best qualified to vote, for the younger generation is better educated than the older women. It will exclude most of the munition workers, whose services have touched the hearts of politicians. It is, moreover, irrational in itself, for women mature earlier than men. For these very reasons, however, it is not a dangerous compromise, for it will not be permanent. It may be politic at the start to conciliate the fear of a majority of women in the electorate. The sex bar will be removed, and an electorate probably of six millions, and possibly more, will be created to safeguard women's interests.

"The most doubtful feature, to our minds, of the Woman Suffrage recommendation is the adoption for women not of the Parliamentary, but of the Local Government Register. It was in some ways better than the old Parliamentary Register, but it will be much inferior to the new one. It will not include the lodger at all, nor the daughter living at home, though the wife is expressly provided for. Further, it offers some opportunities to the 'Faggot' voter, since it includes as a qualification the occupancy of any premises or land. In Scotland, where the local and Parliamentary registers are the same, the anomalies will not occur if (as we suppose) the Scottish local register will be automatically reformed along with the Parliamentary register. Is it too late to urge that, with an age limit of twenty-five or (if we must be moderate) thirty, the Parliamentary Register should be the same for women as for men? It remains to be seen what action the Government will take. Delay will be fatal, for the de-limiting of the redistributed constituencies will require time. For women the only possible procedure is to include them in the Bill from the start—leaving the House free to exclude them, if it chooses. They cannot, in view of the Speaker's repeated rulings, be added to the Bill by way of amendment."

Mr. W. H. Dickinson, M.P., who was, of course, a member of the Speaker's Conference, writing in *The Nation* of February 3rd, says that "though the recommendations of the Conference will not commend themselves to everybody, they constitute a basis upon which a reasonable system of Woman's Suffrage can be built up, and they mark an onward step in the progress of the movement, which should be of the utmost value to its supporters. Moreover, the result of the Conference's deliberations is evidence of a trend of opinion which undoubtedly prevails in the country. There is a general feeling that women should no longer be altogether debarred from exercising the franchise, and, at the same time, there is a not unreasonable hesitation about adding to the electorate, at a stroke of the pen, the entire adult female population. There are in the United Kingdom about 14,000,000 women over twenty-one, and about 12,500,000 men, of whom 8,000,000 are on the present register.

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If the recommendations of the Speaker's Conference are carried out, the male electorate would be raised to ten or eleven millions, while the female electors might number twelve millions. Such a gigantic change may well justify the consideration which the Conference have given to the question of restricting the admission of women to the register at least for a time. . . . The number of women over twenty-five years of age exceeds 12,000,000; those over thirty number more than 10,000,000. There are nearly 8,500,000 women of thirty-five years or more. . . . It would be almost absurd to take a higher age than thirty, and this would result in a female electorate of about 9,000,000.

"The proposal which the more Conservative Suffragists have always advocated," says Mr. Dickinson, "is to enfranchise for parliamentary purposes those women only who have the municipal vote. These comprise about one million persons."

Such a franchise would practically exclude all married women. To meet these objections the Conference have accepted an age qualification of thirty or thirty-five, and they also adopt a limitation by qualification—namely, the occupation of any premises, either as a tenant or wife of a tenant. As all tenants find their way on to the register of Local Government voters, it would be easy to compile a list of the Parliamentary electorate. This scheme will probably admit some 6,000,000 women to the Parliamentary franchise, while providing an electorate of between 10,000,000 or 11,000,000 men. "When it is found—as it certainly will be found," says Mr. Dickinson—"that the admission of women to electoral rights has none of the dangers which some people anticipate, it will not be difficult to extend the female franchise by placing it on precisely the same basis as that on which the male franchise is now about to rest."

Various Views.

"The skill, industry, and effectiveness of woman have surpassed all expectation," says Dr. Clifford, in a sermon reported in the *Christian World Pulpit*. "To many it is a revelation; to others it is only what was anticipated, if ever the doors of the world were flung open free for their entrance. In addition to her work as directress of the forces of life, of the thoughts and preferences, of the desires and habits of children, and mediator of the wisdom of the heart to man, she has shown a capability for action in this crisis of the nation's history such as has destroyed for ever the despotism of men in erecting barriers against her entrance on equal terms with men into the realm of civic and political responsibility. The war has burnt up the rubbishy prejudices of the ages, and created a victorious argument for equality of opportunity and full co-operation of woman with man in everything that involves the welfare of the city and the nation, as well as the home and the Church. It must come. Opponents have changed into advocates with a suddenness that shows that the winds of the spirit of liberty have swept their minds clear of the traditional prejudice and made them ready with a welcome.

"Think of it! A few years ago, a few solitary voices like Stuart Mill's exposed and denounced 'the subjection of women'; a few women like Mrs. Fawcett agitated for the suffrage. Then came the revolt, violent, vehement, and desperate, of a few more; and now the war has placed their cause in such a position that it can never be put back. British women must be enfranchised!"

The Liverpool Daily Courier finds the Conference's suggestions with regard to women voters hopelessly illogical.

"They concede votes for wives whose husbands are qualified, doubtless on the ground that no person is rendering better or more necessary active service than a wife and mother. But a wife must be at least thirty years of age before she can vote, a husband only twenty-one. It is as impossible to defend this suggestion as the Committee's decision that unmarried women, who have risked their lives in munition or other war-work, have no claim to the vote; while any male conscientious objector who occupies a £10 house is acclaimed as a desirable and capable and deserving citizen. And why a young lady doctor should be unfitted to vote, while a young bricklayer's labourer is held to be fitted, is an argument that certainly requires some demonstration."

The Financial News.—"Does the Conference really suggest that a male hooligan of twenty-one is fit to vote, while a lady graduate of the same age is unfit? Such a proposition has only to be stated to be squashed. If a woman is fit to pay rates and taxes, she is fit to vote. From the moment when she does either, and the vote is refused her, every principle of constitutional fair play is outraged and defied."

The Northern Whig (Belfast) of February 1st, in an editorial on the report of Electoral Reform Conference, makes the following remarks:—

"The time has come when women should receive their just rights. They are entitled to the same civic privileges as men. . . . If an honest scheme of electoral reform is to be carried through, women must be placed on the same footing as men. To say that those who bring men into the world . . . are incapable of distinguishing between the merits of Jones and Smith is a stupid piece of absurdity which should disqualify any man from exercising the Parliamentary franchise."

(We are informed that this is the first time that any Belfast paper has recognised in its editorial columns the justice and urgency of the women's claim to vote on the same terms as men.)

The Deportation of Women and Girls in France, Belgium, and Serbia.

An Appeal to the Women of All Countries.

The following appeal from the Women of France has been received, with a letter from Mme. de Witt Schlumberger, President of the Union Française pour le Suffrage des Femmes:—

1.

Chère Madame,—Nous vous envoyons l'appel que les Femmes françaises adressent aux femmes de tous les Pays.

Nous vous serions reconnaissantes de bien vouloir le faire insérer dans la presse de votre pays et particulièrement dans les journaux féminins et féministes.

Nous vous demanderions aussi de nous faire savoir si les femmes de votre pays ont déjà protesté au sujet des déportations—et dans ce cas, de bien vouloir nous envoyer le texte de leur protestation,

Croyez, chère madame, à nos sentiments les meilleurs.

DE WITT SCHLUMBERGER,
Présidente de l'U.F.S.F.

2.

LES FEMMES FRANCAISES AUX FEMMES DE TOUS LES PAYS.

Parmi les protestations solennelles que le monde entier dresse contre les déportations, les femmes françaises ont voulu que leur voix se distingue et s'élève.

Comment n'auraient-elles pas frissoné d'indignation en apprenant que, sous les joug allemand, disparait tout respect de la famille et de ses liens? En apprenant que des femmes de France, de Belgique, de Serbie, d'autres encore ont été ou seront cruellement arrachées de leurs maris, de leurs enfants, lorsque l'envahisseur en aura besoin pour le service de ses officiers, de ses usines, ou de ses tranchées?

Entre tous les crimes de l'ennemi, il n'en est pas qui doive étreindre de plus d'anxieté l'âme de la femme. N'est-ce pas autour d'elle que dans chaque civilisation se groupe la famille? N'est-ce pas elle dont la longue patience a défendu au cours des siècles, l'intimité du foyer, la fragilité de l'enfance, la moralité de la jeunesse? C'est pourquoi nous convions les femmes, toutes les femmes, à se joindre à notre manifestation. Toutes sont éclairées, aucune ne doit ignorer les lois internationales, lentement élaborées, pour la sauvegarde des non-combattants, aucune ne peut ignorer que de l'aveu même des responsables, ces lois, formulées par eux, ont été piétinées.

Les protestations émouvantes des plus hautes autorités politiques, sociales et réligieuses n'ont pu arrêter ces brutales dispersions; les gouvernements criminels les poursuivent en escomptant la crainte ou la passivité des peuples. Seront-ils appuyés par le silence des femmes? Oublieraient-elles que le respect du droit d'autrui reste le plus sûr garant de notre propre droit et que si l'histoire, dans ses retours, exposait aux mêmes dangers d'autres générations et d'autres peuples, elles et leurs filles ne pourraient élever la voix ni pour se plaindre, ni maudire? A quelque pays qu'elle appartienne: Alliée, Neutre ou Ennemie, chacune doit reconnaitre sa responsabilité. Se taire, c'est absoudre les soldats qui violent les maisons et arrêtent les passants pour choisir des victimes, c'est devenir leur complice; se taire, c'est s'interdire à tout jamais d'invoquer le droit et des traités, de donner à une action privée ou publique, l'autorité d'un fondement moral. Quelle est la femme qui se refusera à entendre notre appel et à juger la barbarie? Que toutes celles dont le foyer a été respecté s'unissent dans un élan de justice et de compassion. Au sommet de l'angoisse et de la douleur, nos sœurs, victimes de la force, n'esperent aujourd'hui le secours que de la conscience du Monde.

CONSEIL NATIONAL DES FEMMES FRANÇAISES,
Fédération de 150 Sociétés Féminines.
UNION FRANÇAISE POUR LE SUFFRAGE DES FEMMES,
Fédération des 80 Groupements Départementaux.
SOCIÉTÉ POUR L'AMÉLIORATION DU SORT DE LA FEMME.
UNION FRATERNELLE DES FEMMES.
SOCIÉTÉ DE SUFFRAGE DES FEMMES.
CROISADE DES FEMMES FRANÇAISES.

3.

À PROPOS DES DÉPORTATIONS.

TÉMOIGNAGE D'UNE JEUNE FILLE DE LILLE, MLLE. X——
QUI A ÉTÉ EMMENÉE PAR LES ALLEMANDS

Entre deux et trois heures du matin, les soldats viennent faire la râfle dans les habitations—par quartier en général—et pour éviter toute révolte ou émeute, les mitrailleuses sont braquées dans les rues.

Jeunes filles de la bourgeoisie et filles sont emmenées pêle-mêle de façon à pouvoir leur faire subir à toutes les mêmes traitements. Avant le départ, sous le ménace du révolver, on leur fait signer un engagement indiquant qu'elles partent "volontairement." On a déclaré à Mlle. X—— et à ses compagnes qu'elles étaient maintenant au service de l'Allemagne: Mlle. X—— a vu des faits atroces. Toutes les femmes et jeunes filles *devant servir* aux officiers et soldats sont examinées et passées au speculum. "Dans votre interêt, comme dans celui de notre santé" disent-ils. La famille de Mlle. X—— ayant payé 2,000 marks, elle a pu revenir deux jours avant son tour de visite.

Actuellement, les jeunes filles ne sont pas toutes revenues: on a renvoyé seulement celles devenues malades ou enceintes, ou atteintes nerveusement (plusieurs sont devenues folles).

(Certifié par la Secrétaire générale de l'Union française pour le Suffrage des Femmes.)

Many representative women's societies are writing to express their deep horror and indignation at the atrocities described in the documents communicated, and their sympathy with the whole French and other nations suffering from such barbarities.

Correspondence.

PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION.

MADAM,—Proportional representation has entered practical politics. The Speaker's Conference recommends that the citizens of the towns, whether they are in a majority or in a minority, shall all be fairly, *i.e.*, proportionately, represented in Parliament. This recommendation of the Conference will go a considerable way towards making the House of Commons fully representative, and, as our statesmen have pointed out, it is essential that the after-the-war Parliament shall be so constituted as to be fully and fairly representative of the citizens whose lives will be so intimately affected by reconstruction.

Among its other advantages, proportional representation will ensure an adequate, serious, and intelligent discussion of these great after-the-war questions. The creation of an Empire Parliament, constitutional reform within the United Kingdom, the relations between labour and capital, international trade, finance, all call for outspoken leadership and for clear statements of policy. Proportional representation will encourage both.

Australia at the present moment furnishes a striking comment on the paralyzing uncertainty attaching to a parliamentary career under our present system. Were elections to take place next April, as they may, Mr. Hughes might be defeated in his own constituency, whereas, under proportional representation, he would be sure of his place in Parliament as the leading representative of a considerable body of opinion. Further, the composition of the Senate, which is elected by universal suffrage, shows how grossly unrepresentative a popular chamber can be in the absence of proportional representation. Its unrepresentative character is creating serious difficulties. The majority in the Senate—they represent but a minority of the electors—can control the political situation for a considerable time.

Many citizens have become familiar with proportional representation through the model elections organised before the war with the co-operation of the Press; but now proportional representation may be set in motion at the next general election many more of your readers will desire to become acquainted with its working and the reasons for adopting this reform. To such enquirers I shall be glad to send explanatory leaflets.

JOHN H. HUMPHREYS, *Secretary*,
The Proportional Representation Society.
179, St. Stephen's House, Westminster, S.W.

ENFRANCHISEMENT OF IRISH WOMEN.

MADAM,—May I call the attention of British Suffragists to the very serious fact that the recommendations of the Electoral Reform Conference do not extend to Ireland? Assuming for the moment that the recognition of the principle of Woman Suffrage is genuine and that the House of Commons will carry it into effect, there is yet the Irish situation to consider. The exclusion of Ireland from the recommendation involves a delay in the enfranchisement of Irish women, which is, in the first place, a grave injustice, since it refuses to them a right granted to the women of Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, and four provinces of the Dominion of Canada. This injustice is the more glaring as it is recognised on all sides that in the near future Parliament must consider action affecting the government of Ireland. Irish women will, therefore, be refused that effective voice in the settlement of the government of their own country which will be possessed by the women of other sections of the Empire.

The exclusion of Irish women must have the most disastrous effect on the future welfare of the country. The questions pressing for immediate solution are those in which women are most intimately concerned, and these problems of industrial, social, and educational reconstruction will be settled without the co-operation of women unless enfranchisement is included in any measure of franchise or electoral reform.—Yours, &c.,

DORA MELLONE.

[*While fully sharing our correspondent's desire for the enfranchisement of Irishwomen, we may yet recognise that the proposed limited measure is a part only of a scheme of reform which it is not proposed to extend to Ireland.*—ED., C.C.]

Reviews.

The Englishwoman contains an article by Miss Mary Lowndes on "Public Opinion and Peace Problems," in which she maintains that women are influencing public opinion as never before, and that they should, therefore, do their utmost at the present time to form their considered judgment with relation to the problems before the nation. Dr. Elsie Inglis writes on "Three Months on the Eastern Front," and there is an excellent article on "The Loan and Economy," in which the writer points out that the women who have gone into industry since the war have helped, materially, to keep up our export trade, by means of which we must largely pay for the war. But, she points out, "we are still far from the position in Paris, where women may not be paid less than men for similar work."

The English Review contains an enlightening article by Mrs. Alec Tweedie on "Martial Law and Women." Written with a deft and light touch it is just the kind of summing-up of the position of women in war time from a woman's point of view, which can be sent to the most obdurate Gallio with full confidence that he will read it, and read it through. "They say woman has found herself," says Mrs. Tweedie. "Nothing of the kind. Man has found woman. . . . . Untrained nurses? No. Certainly not! Women orderlies? Ridiculous! Women ticket-collectors, 'bus conductors, chauffeurs? Absurd! Women munition workers? Preposterous! How those Ministers and Generals have eaten their words. . . . . Man has at last discovered woman's versatility."

THE LIBERAL WOMEN'S REVIEW. (Liberal Women's Suffrage Union. Quarterly, 3d.)

The January number contains articles on the L.W.U. Suffrage Campaign, by Mrs. Buchanan Alderton, and Another "Great Push" for Suffrage, by Mrs. McLaren, which show that the Union is fully alive to the importance of obtaining the suffrage for women in time for them to help in the election of the Parliament that will deal with reconstruction. It is announced that the Committee of the L.W.S.U. have unanimously decided—after much thought—to begin an educational campaign among the Liberal women of the country. "We are of opinion," writes Mrs. Alderton, "that the question of Women's Suffrage is rapidly approaching a crisis, and if we postpone our work until after the war we may lose a priceless opportunity of securing political and economic liberty for women. We are fully aware that most Liberal women are, at present, giving of their best to war activities, and it may be difficult, and even irksome, to them to arrange meetings, but in all our stress of war-work it is important that we should not lose sight of what is to happen after the war. If we want women to take their share in the 'great rebuilding of the nation,' in the settlement of the economic questions, in the consideration of the problems relating to military service, temperance, morality, education, &c., we must keep ourselves in touch with the changes which are going on around us, and which, indirectly, are bringing Women's Suffrage so acutely to the front."

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Speakers:
Mr. WALTER RUNCIMAN, M.P. Mrs. CREIGHTON
Mr. J. H. THOMAS Mrs. OLIVER STRACHEY
Viscount COWDRAY

Other speakers will be announced later.

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A Step Forward!

The Report of the Speaker's Conference on Electoral Reform.

By M. G. Fawcett.

The past week has seen the birth of events perhaps the greatest and most thrilling that have taken place in the whole thirty months of the war.

The greatest of the neutrals has broken off diplomatic relations with Germany, and "takes it for granted that all other neutral Governments will pursue the same course."

With events of such measureless importance afoot, we may, therefore, expect certain well-meaning, but imperfectly informed, persons to say more insistently than ever that this is not the time to talk about Women's Suffrage or other reforms in our electoral system. But this is surely to take but a very limited view of the situation as a whole. As in personal affairs, the presence of a great strain, acute anxiety, impending tragedy or impending relief from it, does not preclude the necessity of attending to humbler tasks and duties, and forecasting the needs of the future; so the vastness of this world-struggle in which our country is one of the protagonists—"a bulwark of the cause of men," as Wordsworth saw her more than a hundred years ago—can only accentuate the necessity for setting our house in order in all possible respects, so that the whole resources of the country in men and women, as well as in material wealth, may be made the best use of, and waste prevented. Almost everyone can now see the folly and national wastefulness which characterised us as a nation before the war, and during the first year of the war, in not using for national purposes the capacities and experience of women. It is part of the creed of Suffragists that this will never be done as fully and completely as it ought to be until the citizenship of women is recognised by giving them the rights of citizens and ceasing to treat them as outsiders or helots.

I make no apology, therefore, for writing during the present crisis on the subject of the Report of the Speaker's Conference on Electoral Reform and its very important bearing on the question of Women's Suffrage.

Certain fundamental facts are quite obvious. Great Britain is governed by free Parliamentary institutions and believes her strength largely to depend on this form of Government; its affairs are controlled by a Parliament and Cabinet responsible to the electors; but, owing to the exigencies of the war, the Parliamentary register of electors has been allowed to become obsolete. It has not been revised and kept up-to-date since 1913. If necessity arose for a General Election, there is at the moment no register on which it could properly be taken. Large numbers of the best men in the electorate have forfeited their votes by the fulfilment of other more urgent national duties in the Army or Navy or in various industrial undertakings. A Parliament elected on a register depleted by the disfranchisement of these men would, as Mr. Asquith said last summer, be lacking in moral authority. A new register is, therefore, a matter of urgent national importance.

Mr. Asquith, on August 16th, 1916, on the second reading of his special register Bill, urged that "it is eminently desirable to provide an electoral basis which will make Parliament reflective and representative of the general opinion of the country. . . . Let us by all means use the time—those of us who are not absolutely absorbed by the conduct of the war—in these months to see if we cannot work out by general agreement some scheme under which, both as regards the electorate and the distribution of political Power, a Parliament can be created . . . commanding the confidence of the country." The appointment of the Speaker's Conference, first

suggested by Mr. Walter Long, was the practical outcome of this debate. Mr. Long urged that it was a national duty "to set ourselves to find a solution which may be a lasting settlement of a very old and difficult problem." Therefore, far from being anti-national to give time and thought during the war to electoral reform including Women's Suffrage, it was represented by experienced political leaders to be a national duty of first-class importance.

Let us, as Suffragists, consider what the Speaker's Conference has recommended as regards our own question. It should, as a preliminary, be remembered that the Speaker, on whose invitation the Conference was formed, considered it his duty to obtain, as regards numbers, an equal representation of Suffragists and anti-Suffragists. The fact, therefore, that the Suffrage recommendations were supported by a majority—and rumour says a large majority—is very significant; and indicates, as Mr. W. H. Dickinson points out in an interesting article in *The Nation* of February 3rd, the change of view which everyone must have noticed of anti-Suffragists into Suffragists. The Conference decided by a majority that some measure of Women's Suffrage should be conferred; and also suggested as its most practical form a franchise for women based on the existing Local Government Register for women, but including the wives of men who are on that Register. The recommendation amounts to household Suffrage for women, and in the opinion of Mr. Dickinson would add, even if the very high age-limit thirty or thirty-five were adopted, 6,000,000 women to the register.

The recommendations of the Conference form, in my opinion, an immensely important step towards the realisation of all that Suffragists have worked for; the most important step, so far as Parliament is concerned, which has ever been taken. The recommendations as regards men go a long way, but not the whole way, towards manhood suffrage for men. If Parliament accepts the Report of the Conference, and converts it into law, we shall have in this country Manhood Suffrage (or a near approach to it) for men, and Household Suffrage for women. When women were first enfranchised in Norway, the Norwegian Parliament, which was giving manhood suffrage to men, gave at the same time a taxpaying suffrage to women—*i.e.*, to those women who themselves paid a certain, not large, amount in direct taxation, and to the wives of men who paid a similar amount. The reason was to be found in the dread which men in Norway felt to creating a Parliament elected by a constituency more than half of which consisted of women. Half-a-dozen years' experience convinced all three parties in Norway—Conservative, Liberal, and Socialist—that these fears were entirely illusory, and the restriction of the women's vote to women who paid direct taxation was removed. I believe our experience would be the same if the measure of enfranchisement recommended by the Speaker's Conference were adopted by Parliament and passed into law; although, perhaps, we might not be quite so prompt in acknowledging our mistake and putting it right as Norway was. One of the New Zealand statesmen whom the N.U.W.S.S. entertained at luncheon the other day said to me: "After you have found out in this country that a thing is wrong, it takes you fifty years to put it right." There is justice in the criticism. But the war has speeded things up in many directions, and national evils and errors have been attacked, and to a great extent overcome, much more zealously and rapidly since August, 1914, than in any other two and a-half years in our history that I can remember.

There are some who look upon it as a sort of personal indignity to married women that they should be put on the Parliamentary register on account of a qualification standing in their husband's name. I cannot but regard this as fanciful. If women are put on the Parliamentary Register as wives of householders, it is but a practical legislative recognition of the partnership of the wife and mother in the home. This is a well-known and universally recognised fact of normal social life, and to base legislation upon it, appears to me sound from every point of view. The laws we most complain of, such as non-recognition of the rights of mothers over children born in wedlock, and the non-recognition of the responsibility of fathers for children born out of wedlock, are vile, chiefly because they are in blind opposition to plain and universally recognised facts and laws of life.

The question may, perhaps, be asked of me, "Are you, then, entirely satisfied by the proposals embodied in the Report of the Speaker's Conference?" I should answer this question by a very distinct negative. We are asking, and shall continue to ask, for the Suffrage for women in the same terms on which it is, or may be, granted to men. But I do not think it is very wonderful if, at one stroke, Parliament should refuse to enfranchise the entire female population, estimated at the present time at about 14,000,000. Men in this country have never been enfranchised in this wholesale fashion. The anti-Suffragists never tire of reiterating that there is no mean between the entire disfranchisement of the female sex and putting the whole 14,000,000 at once upon the register. I have always denied this, and have constantly pointed to the fact that some men have had votes ever since the reign of Edward I., but that they had not reached manhood suffrage yet; six centuries is rather a long time, and with the speeding up of which I spoke just now, women probably would not be so long in getting their whole sex enfranchised. But, to my mind, it is manifestly an absurdity to say that Parliament is unable to devise some gradual means for removing the political disabilities of women.

Our position, in my opinion, should in short be this, to welcome with enthusiasm the breaking down of the sex barrier which is recommended by the Speaker's Conference; to signify that we are not particularly in love with the definite proposals made for putting women on the Parliamentary Register. In particular we want a fuller representation for the industrial woman, and we urge the lowering of the very high age limit. But we should not be acting with a full sense of our responsibility to our great cause, if, by meticulous criticism, we lost the opportunity of getting some 6,000,000 women on the Register before the next General Election.

The Millicent Fawcett Hospital Units.

Work for the Russian Soldier.

Dr. King Atkinson has just returned from Russia on short leave, and has many interesting things to tell of the work she has been doing there. It will be remembered that the Unit of which she was in charge went out originally with a view to working among the refugees, but, being placed on the Front, between Galicia and the Bukovina, it had to be pressed into the service of the army, the need being most urgent. Far from hindering the civilian work, however, it has been a great advantage to the Unit to be connected with the military authorities, through whom all the rationing and so on has to be done. It has given the Unit a better status, and they have been able to obtain certain rights and concessions that they might not otherwise have gained. For instance, when they were short of sanitars (orderlies), the authorities sent them some old soldiers, who were of the greatest assistance. In the military hospital, the authorities pay all the expenses except the actual salaries, so that almost the entire fund collected for the Units is devoted to the civilian hospital.

The Unit reached Galeshchiki on July 1st, and took over the existing military hospital there a few days later. The village had only been taken by the Russians early in June, and had been terribly knocked about by shell fire, but the hospital, fortunately, was intact. Practically all the peasants had fled, and on the occasion of the return of the first few peasant-women to the town, all the military turned out to gaze at them. The two chief features of the village, Dr. King Atkinson told me, were wardrobes and dogs. At one time no less than eighteen dogs came to be fed every day—dogs of every sort and size, from a big St. Bernard to little yapping terriers—and starting with one little stray, the numbers grew steadily, as they looked in at the windows and crept in at the door, trying to ingratiate themselves in all the ways peculiar to dogs, and bitterly jealous of one another, so that proceedings were often enlivened by a fight.

"As to the wardrobes, they were a perfect mystery. I cannot imagine where they all came from," said Dr. King Atkinson. "We were always coming across them in cottages and up little side streets, and put to all sorts of use. Fine big inlaid wardrobes they were, too, that must have seen better days."

"Our hospital is in a beautiful situation," said Dr. King Atkinson. "Galeshchiki stands on a bend of the Bukovina, with great high cliffs behind, ever changing in their colour and covered with vegetation of all sorts. The building was originally an agricultural college, in the midst of a wonderful garden, so beautiful and peaceful that if it were not for the booming of the guns and constant passing of prisoners, one could almost forget the war. These prisoners were mere lads

Will YOU Give to Your Country?

The following is taken from a letter recently received by the Editor of The Common Cause *from a lady who desires to remain anonymous:—*

"I wrote to you last week, saying that it would give me great pleasure to give a donation of fifty pounds towards The Common Cause Hut, to be used for the comfort of women and girl workers. Anything that makes for the uplift, health, and happiness of women, appeals to me greatly, as I feel that the welfare of our Country lies so much in their influence and work.

"The money I am sending to you is the savings of ten years, and if it did not mean some sacrifice, I should think it an unworthy gift.

"When this last War Loan was asked for from the nation, I at first thought I would lend it to my Country, but on second thoughts I decided to give it, thinking it would accomplish a more certain and speedy result for good. . . . With all good wishes for the success of your enterprise for the splendid work being carried on by the N.U.W.S.S., I am, &c."

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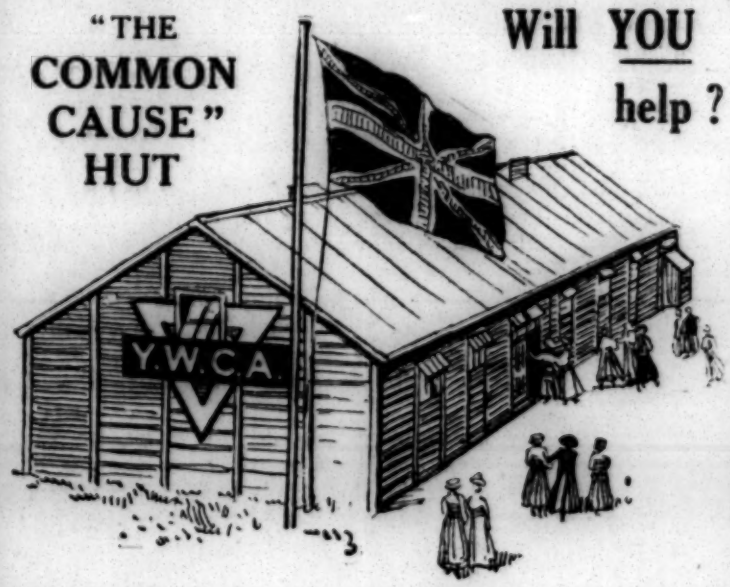

In response to our appeal last week for an additional £200 for equipping the Canteen, providing tables, chairs, urns, crockery, &c., for "THE COMMON CAUSE" HUT, we have already received donations amounting to £95 2s. 6d., thus leaving a balance of only £104 17s. 6d. to complete.

If you would like to participate, please send your donation THIS WEEK.

Please send Cheques, Postal Orders, &c., to the Editor of "The Common Cause," 14, Great Smith St., Westminster, S.W.

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14, Great Smith St., Westminster, S.W.

Dear Madam,

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most of them, and many of them fell out by the way and were taken into our hospital, where they were treated exactly like the Russians, and received the greatest kindness from their fellow-patients.

"Then, a few at a time, the peasants began to crawl back to their homes, too often to find them burnt out or laid in ruins. There was a shocking state of overcrowding, and much illness broke out, and we had a busy time visiting houses in the neighbourhood to look after the sick. The favourite place to put a sick child is on top of the stove, and it used to seem a marvel to us sometimes that they didn't melt away. There were only five of us to start with—Dr. Helena Hall, and myself, and three Sisters—so you can imagine that we had our hands full. A little later, two more Sisters joined us, and when we started a second hospital for civilians, some twenty-three versts away, we were reinforced by two more. The Sisters worked splendidly, and never failed to rise to the occasion. They used to drive round in little chaises, made of basket-work, on wheels, sometimes journeying 60 or 70 versts in one day.

"For orderlies we had Russian sanitars, and later on some old soldiers, who were most willing and adaptable, and after a little training they were a very great help. We also had a few prisoners to do some of the rough outside work. At first we worked with the 9th Army, but later we were transferred to the 7th, and everybody was greatly excited when the great General Brusiloff made his visit to the village hospitals. He is greatly beloved by all the soldiers, who have the utmost faith in him.

"The bulk of the work among the refugees was carried on in their own homes, and was mostly of a sanitary nature; but the need for isolating certain cases led to the establishment of the second hospital. At one time, with a staff of five, we vaccinated over 20,000 people—soldiers and civilians. In the military hospital the need was always urgent. Both hospitals are still going on, and we are as badly wanted as ever, being the only establishment of their kind for 290 versts."

"One thing that struck us very much," continued Dr. Atkinson, "was the cleanliness of the Russian soldiers. All along the line there are excellent bathing establishments, where the soldiers can have hot-air baths, as well as plenty of hot water, and where they are provided with clean clothing.

"Then there is the Empress Alexandra's train, which provides baths for thousands of soldiers every day. It is beautifully fitted up with the best English apparatus, containing a hot-air chamber, a cooling-room, and facilities for washing and drying clothes, and it is always kept in perfect order. We were invited to inspect it, and to have a bath, which we much appreciated. Even the cottages, in this part of Russia, have bathrooms attached, and the very first cry of the soldiers when they come into the hospital is for a bath.

"The Russian soldier is extraordinarily brave and uncomplaining, and very grateful for anything that is done for him. There is great rivalry in the different wards as to the merits of the Sisters, as each ward brags about its particular Sister, and maintains that she is the most wonderful of them all. The fact that the nurses do things for the patients themselves, instead of leaving them for the sanitars to do, made a deep impression upon the patients. We are very well known in the district for miles around, and any soldiers who have been in the hospital always welcome us with joy if they meet us again.

"Although the running expenses of the two hospitals are very small now, as the Russian authorities supply most of their needs, funds are still wanted to carry on the work, which would be greatly missed if we were obliged to drop it, and I do hope the National Union will be able to collect enough money to keep us going as long as we are so urgently needed."

LONDON UNIT OF THE SCOTTISH WOMEN'S HOSPITAL.

There is no further news of Dr. Elsie Inglis.

The work at the offices of the London Unit has grown very much in the last few months, and, the present accommodation being too small for the staff required, the offices are being moved this week from the basement to the first floor at the back of the same building, 66, Victoria Street.

Lady Ashmore has resigned the Secretaryship, and Miss Florence Chapman has been appointed as her successor.

Collecting cards for 1s. subscriptions, and collecting boxes in the form of ambulances, are now ready, and can be obtained on application at 66, Victoria Street.

Funds are urgently needed to maintain the London Units. Contributions should be sent to the Hon. Treasurers, the Viscountess Cowdray, or the Hon. Mrs. Spencer Graves, and equipment to the Equipment Secretary, 66, Victoria Street.

Notes from Headquarters.

The National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies.
President: MRS. HENRY FAWCETT, LL.D
Hon. Secretaries: MISS EVELYN ATKINSON. MRS. OLIVER STRACHEY (Parliamentary)
Hon. Treasurer: MRS. AUERBACH.
Secretary: MISS HELEN WRIGHT.
Offices: Parliament Chambers, 14, Great Smith Street, Westminster, London, S.W.
Telegraphic Address—Voiceless, London. Telephone—4873 Vic.

The Public Meeting arranged by the National Union as a Demonstration of Women Workers will be held at Queen's Hall on February 20th, at 8 o'clock. Mrs. Fawcett will take the Chair, and the Speakers will be announced later.

Tickets, price 10s., 2s. 6d., and 1s., can be obtained from Headquarters; delegates to the Council half price, and there will be a special reduction for any party taking more than four tickets. As this will be one of the most important political demonstrations which the National Union has ever held, we urge all Suffragists to make an effort to be present.

The Literature Department is now able to supply the report of the Speaker's Conference on Electoral Reform. Price 1d.

We regret an error in last week's "Notes." "Law and the Woman," by Judge Parry, should have been price 1s.

Contributions to the General Fund.

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IMPORTANT.

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TREASURY NOTES should be treated like coins, and *always* registered.

If any contributions remain more than two days unacknowledged, please write at once to the SECRETARY, N.U.W.S.S., 14, Great Smith Street, S.W.

Please address letters containing money either to the SECRETARY, or to Mrs. Auerbach or Miss Sterling by name, *not* to the Treasurer.

OBITUARY.

We regret to announce the death, on January 30th, of Mr. Thomas Joseph Haslam, in his ninety-second year, at his residence, 163, Rathgar Road, Dublin. Mr. Haslam was well known as a supporter of Women's Suffrage, and was keenly interested in local government. He was the author of several pamphlets on these subjects, and frequently spoke at public meetings. His loss will be deeply felt by many people in Dublin and by Suffragists there and elsewhere.

RESOLUTION OF THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE.

The following resolution has been sent to the Prime Minister by the Consultative Committee of Constitutional Women's Suffrage Societies (February 5th, 1917):—

"We, the undersigned, representing different Women's Suffrage Societies, heartily welcome the recommendation of the Speaker's Conference that Women's Suffrage should be conferred.

"We are unanimously of opinion that this recommendation should be carried into effect at once, and we therefore strongly urge the Prime Minister to include a proposal for Women's Suffrage in the Government Bill embodying the recommendations of the Conference. It cannot be expected that Societies whose demand is for Women's Suffrage on the same terms as men should hail the detailed proposals with entire satisfaction. Without expressing an opinion upon the suggested basis, however, we all desire to welcome the removal of the sex barrier."

GERTRUDE FORBES-ROBERTSON, Actresses' Franchise League.
FLORENS ROCH, Catholic Women's Suffrage Society.
MAUD ANNA BELL, Church League for Women's Suffrage.
MAUD SELBORNE, Conservative and Unionist Women's Franchise Association.
JANE E. STRICKLAND, Free Church League for Women's Suffrage.
GULIELMA CROSFIELD, Friends' League for Women's Suffrage.
J. SPRING-RICE, Irishwomen's Suffrage Federation.
HERBERT JACOBS, Men's League for Women's Suffrage.
ESTHER S. ROPER, National Industrial and Professional Women's Suffrage Soc.
EVA MCLAREN, Liberal Women's Suffrage Union.
MILLICENT GARRETT FAWCETT, National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies.
A. M. CHAPMAN, New Constitutional Society for Women's Suffrage.
FRANCES BALFOUR, Scottish Churches League for Women's Suffrage.
FRANCES H. SIMSON, Scottish University Women's Suffrage Union.
HENRY W. NEVINSON, United Suffragists.
C. DESPARD, Women's Freedom League.
GERTRUDE EATON, Women's Tax Resistance League.
I. E. HARRISON, Hastings and St. Leonard's W.S. Propaganda League.

"The Common Cause" Hut.

We have great pleasure in announcing that our readers' Hut Fund has now reached the total of £595 2s. 6d., enough to cover the cost of building the hut and furnish part of the equipment.

The hut will be at Coventry, where the need for rest and recreation rooms is so great that the Ministry of Munitions has divided the district into sections, for which various organisations are responsible. The Y.W.C.A. is undertaking one of these sections, which is between the town and a large munition factory employing from 5,000 to 6,000 girls; and THE COMMON CAUSE Hut will be placed here. Housing accommodation is very difficult in Coventry, and it is therefore urgent that the Hut should include a few cubicles and a couple of bathrooms, so that girls can be housed temporarily till suitable lodgings can be found for them. For this addition to the original design, and for the remainder of the equipment, funds are still needed, so please send *at once* to the Editor, THE COMMON CAUSE, 14, Great Smith Street, London, S.W.

We gratefully acknowledge the following sums:—

	£	s.	d.
Already acknowledged ...	567	15	0
Miss Julia Size		2	6
Miss S. M. Robinson		3	6
Epsom and District W.S.S. ...	2	2	0
Miss A. Lund	2	0	0
Dr. Esther L. Carling	1	1	0
Mrs. Turnbull		10	0
Mrs. J. E. Thornton		2	6
Mrs. J. P. Margoliouth		10	0
Miss Gertrude Taylor		10	6
Miss Blackmar Dash	10	0	0
Miss Margaret Hare		2	6
Miss E. Stephens		3	0
Miss L. Coats	10	0	0
	£595	2	6

LONDON LABOUR COUNCIL FOR ADULT SUFFRAGE

Delegate Electoral Reform Conference

HOLBORN HALL, GRAY'S INN ROAD,
On SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17th, 3.30 p.m.
Chairman: FRED. BRAMLEY (N.A.F.T.)

CONCERT AND DANCE in the Same Hall, 7.30
Concert arranged by Miss Harris, M.C. Mr. Fred. Hagger

Concert and Dance tickets 1/-, Spectators' tickets to the Conference 1/- to be obtained from the I.L.P. Office, St. Bride's House, Salisbury Square, E.C., B.S.P. Office, Chandos Hall, Maiden Lane, Strand, and Workers Suffrage Federation, 400, Old Ford Road, Bow, E.

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Subscriptions are still urgently needed, and should be sent to Mrs. Laurie, Hon. Treasurer, S.W.H., Red House, Greenock. Cheques to be crossed "Royal Bank of Scotland." Subscriptions for the London Units to be sent to the Right Hon. Viscountess Cowdray, or the Hon. Mrs. Spencer Graves, Hon. Treasurers, 66, Victoria Street, Westminster, London, S.W.

	£	s.	d.
Forward as per list to January 25th, 1917	164,479	10	0
Further donations received to February 1st, 1917:—			
Per Miss A. O. Ritchie, Hon. Sec., to continue "Ladies' Choir, Sir Michael St. U.F. Church" Bed	25	0	0
*Per Mrs. M. McCuaig: Miss Russell	50	0	0
*Per Miss Moir, Hon. Treas., N.U.W.S.S., from Falkirk Iron Works Co., to name a second bed (Salonica)	25	0	0
*Mrs. J. R. Whyte, towards "Birkenhead" bed (Royaumont)	10	0	0
*Rotherfield and Mark Cross W.S.S. (£5), Mrs William Marshall (£2 2s.), Per Mrs. Wm. Marshall: Miss Hay Cooper (£2 2s.), Mrs. Mosley (£1), North Berks W.S.S. (£10)	20	4	0
*Per Mrs. Bye, Hon. Treas., to complete £25 sent from West Bromwich N.U.W.S.S. to name bed (six months) ...	6	4	6
Per Miss Gow: League of Honour Members	8	0	
*Miss H. S. Grant, per Mrs. Pauline C. Rankine	1	0	0
*Per Mrs. Robertson: Employees Messrs. Glenfield & Kennedy (£15 18s.), Employees Messrs. Boyd & Forrest (£2 13s. 6d.), Employees Messrs. Dick Kerr & Co. (£4 4s. 8½d.)	22	16	2½
*Per Miss M. C. Morrison, Hon. Treas., Glasgow and West of Scotland Joint Com., money received from the Flower Sales in Glasgow ...	1,500	0	0
Per George B. Douglas, Esq., Hon. Sec., St. Andrew's Society of Tientsin, Contributions from Members of the Society, "St. Andrew's Night"	148	11	8
*Per Miss Brown: Contributions for week ending Dec. 30th, 1916, from Employees of Smith's Warehouse	10	0	
*Per Miss Brown: Part proceeds of a series of Whist Drives held by the Grosvenor Bowling Club, per John Walker, Esq., Sec.	2	0	0
*Per James McCosh, Esq.: Employees Messrs. Fleming, Reid & Co. Ltd. (£6 3s.), Employees Messrs. Thomas Biggart & Co., Ltd. (£6 0s. 10d.), Employees Messrs. Millar & Anderson (£5 12s. 3d.), Employees Messrs. Kyle, Aitken & Gardiner, Ltd. (£5 2s. 1d.), Staff of Dalry H.G. Public School (£1 13s.), Children of Dalry H.G. Public School (£1 9s. 8d.), Employees of Dalry Co-op. Society, Ltd. (£1 7s.), Millar & Anderson (£1 1s.), Mrs. Fulton, per Box No. 52 (3s. 6d.)	28	12	4
*The Domestic Staff, St. Mary's School, Melrose	10	0	
Per the Rev. N. Macpherson: Half of collection taken at the United Intercessory and Commemoration Service, held in Elgin Parish Church, on December 31st, 1916	6	10	3
*Miss Brock	10	10	0
*Miss J. Hossack	5	0	0
*Per Employees of Messrs. J. G. Kincaid: Second instal. (£25) to complete naming "Clyde Foundry, Greenock" bed ...	15	0	0
*Per Miss Brown: Staff and Employees of Messrs. Blake, Barclay & Co., per D. W. Lachlan, Esq.	2	6	9
Anonymous	16	13	4
Mrs. Wm. Fletcher	10	0	0
*Per Miss Salvesen: Collected for "Heriot Row" bed (one year)	40	0	0
Per Mrs. Mackintosh: Collected for "Charlotte Square Institute Old Pupils" bed... ...	56	5	6
The Misses J. L. and A. G. Ferrier	5	5	0
Mrs. Munro	1	0	0
Miss Mary C. Mackie		2	6
*J. H. Cassels, Esq., per Appeals Com., per Mrs. Reid	5	0	0
*Per David Walker, Esq.: The Seedhill Finishing Co., Ltd.	1	0	0
Mrs. Edward Rankine (Serbia)	5	0	0
Per Mrs. MacLeod: The Ladies' Work Party	4	12	0
*Per Miss Hyde, Hon. Sec., N.U.W.S.S., further donations from Hull W.S.S.	1	11	1
Per R. H. Hamilton, Esq., Hon. Treas., Skelmolie Social and Debating Society, Clydesdale Bank, Ltd., proceeds of Lecture held on the 19th ult. ...	3	0	0
*Hugh Roberts, Esq.	10	10	0
*Per Mrs. Wilson, Hon. Treas., Edinburgh N.U.W.S.S.: Miss Alice Kemp (£10), Miss Daisy Mackay (£2), *Employees Pumpherston Oil Co., Ltd. (£22 2s. 4d.), Ditto, Seafield Works (£6 5s. 9d.); For Dr. Inglis' Unit: Miss Beet (£1), *Women Clerks, Acct. Dept. G.P.O. (£2 9s. 6d.), *Employees Young's Paraffin Light and Mineral Oil Co. (at Hoptown Mining Dept., Newliston Mine, and Ingliston) (£48 12s. 11d.), *Employees McVite & Pine (£15); Per Mr. Herbert Down, to name bed in Royaumont: "Mrs. Perngini" (£50); For "Blackhall" bed: Stamps, Entertainment (9s. 1d.), Mr. Simpson (10s.), Miss Leighton (1s.), Mr. and Mrs Gardner (10s.), Mrs. Young (2s.), Collection Box at P.O., Mr. Matheson (14s. 7d.) (£2 6s. 8d.); First instal., Manwich Confec. Works (£1); Per Miss Sorrell: Children's Cookery Class, Niddry Park School (15s.), *Employees MacTaggart, Scott & Co. (£3 11s. 8d.), Miss Begbie (£2), *Employees Thomson-Porteous (£4 3s.), First instal., Leith Domestic Servants, per J. Russell, Esq. (£2 10s. 2d.), Collection at U.F. Church Hall, S. Clerk St. (£3 4s. 9d.)	177	1	9
*Per Mrs. H. Houston Ross: Mr. and Mrs. Houston Ross (Serbia) (£10), Miss Ross (Serbia)	15	0	0
	£166,711	14	10½

* Denotes further donations.

FURTHER LIST OF BEDS NAMED.

Name of Bed.	*Donor.*
"Ladies' Choir, Sir Michael Street U.F. Church" (Royaumont) (further six months)	Per Miss A. O. Ritchie, Hon. Sec., Sir Michael Street Church.
"Falkirk Iron Works Co." No. 2 (Salonica) (six months)	Per Miss Moir, Hon. Treas., N.U.W.S.S.
"West Bromwich W.S.S." (Salonica) (six months)	24, Gibsongray Street, Falkirk. Per Mrs. Bye, Hon. Treas., West Bromwich N.U.W.S.S., Claremont Cottage, West Bromwich.
"Clyde Foundry (Greenock)" (Dr. Bennett's Unit) (six months)	Per Employees of Messrs. J. G. Kincaid, Greenock.
"Heriot Row" (Corsica) (further one year)	Per Miss Salvesen, 7, Heriot Row, Edinburgh.
"Charlotte Square Institute Old Pupils" (further one year)	Per Miss Salvesen, 7, Heriot Row, Edinburgh.
"Mrs. Pergnini" (Royaumont) (one year)	Per Herbert Down, Esq.

FURTHER HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS ACROSS THE SEAS.

The St. Andrew Society, of Tientsin, decided this year to hold no formal celebrations on St. Andrew's Day, but that the members be asked to subscribe to the Scottish Women's Hospital Fund, the result has been most gratifying.

A cheque has been received by Mrs. Laurie, for £148 11s., from the Hon. Secretary, George B. Douglas, Esq., with a most kind letter, expressing the regard in which the Sister Scots in the Hospital Units are held by the Scotsmen of Tientsin.

The Millicent Fawcett Hospital Units.

FIFTY-FIRST LIST.

	£	s.	d.
Already acknowledged ...	10,790	13	5
Miss H. Beddow	3	0	0
Miss M. Holliday		5	0
Miss E. Gaskell	5	0	0
Mrs. Creighton	5	0	0
Chelsea Branch London Society for W.S.	3	0	0
Mrs. Burt	1	0	0
Miss Nancy Catt		6	0
Miss E. G. Ransley		5	0
Mrs. Percy Thompson, in Memory of Sidney Gilchrist Thomas	10	0	0
Miss Vera M. Allfrey	5	0	0
Mrs. F. W. Giles	1	0	0
Mrs. Perry		2	6
Miss Mary C. Mackie		2	6
Madame Isabella de Steiger ...		5	0
Mrs. James Ward	1	1	0
Miss Margaret D. Buck	1	0	0
Hull W.S.S. (Monthly Col.) ...	1	11	1
Paris W.S.S.	2	0	0
West Norwood B.W.T.A. ...		10	6
Miss A. M. Ridley	1	0	0
Mrs. Hanbury Rowe	1	1	0
Members of the Bournemouth W.S.S.	2	11	0
Miss M. A. Bennett		10	0
Mrs. M. R. Morden	1	1	0
Miss Mary Slee		3	6
Mr. Richard Austen (2nd don.), Philadelphia	10	0	0
Christmas Sale (additional) ...	2	2	6
Gerrard's Cross W.S.S.	13	0	0
Mrs. Boitel-Gill		5	0
Mrs. L. L. Morse	2	2	0
Mr. J. A. Morton		5	0
	£10,865	3	0

Further donations should be sent to the Countess of Selborne, or to Miss Sterling, N.U.W.S.S., 14, Great Smith-street, London, S.W. Cheques and Postal Orders to be crossed "London County & Westminster Bank, Victoria Branch."

Items of Interest.

Maori women are being paid big wages by New Zealand sheep farmers for shearing, says the *Economist*. For years past some of the best known Hawke's Bay clips have been classed by native women, who have done the work satisfactorily.

Presiding at the annual meeting of Barclay's Bank, Mr. F. C. Goodenough stated that he could not speak too highly of the way in which women clerks had done their work. "They have shown great zeal to do their best for the bank," he said, "and to acquire knowledge of the necessary details."

Statistics of the poultry trade for 1916 show a decline in supplies of forty-four eggs per head for Great Britain. Though the home-grown British egg supply has increased in value, since 1913, from £9,000,000 to £14,000,000; there has not been a corresponding increase in quantity. The egg and poultry industry is very clearly an important branch of food production, especially as we are now importing only half our pre-war supply of poultry for the table.

Mrs. S. C. Layzell—before the war Margaret Capell, a schoolmistress in Northampton—is now manager of a large estate in British East Africa, while her husband is doing "his bit" as a captain in General Smuts' army. She has taken over the entire work of the plantation at Voi, on the Uganda Railway, which involves the management of large gangs of extra "native" labour at certain seasons, besides the regular staff of blacks; there is no other white person on the estate, and, until recently, none within a radius of ten miles.

Owing to the bad payment of women clerks in Government Offices, there is a tendency for girls to leave and seek better paid work elsewhere as soon as they have gained a little experience. Mr. Herbert H. Elwin, General Secretary of the National Union of Clerks, states that he has been informed that the authorities at the Office of Works (Storey's-gate) intend to inform women clerks that they must stay until the end of the war or accept notice. If this policy is adopted the difficulties which Government offices already find in obtaining competent workers will be greatly increased.

THE ANIMAL RESCUE LEAGUE, 397, City-road, E.C., has recovered sixty-five cats and dogs from the ruins of the great explosion. Much difficulty was experienced in rescuing them. In some cases searchers have had to get under floors and even up chimneys. Many of the animals were mad with terror and hunger. Some were in such a dreadful condition that they had to be destroyed in lethal chambers.

What Some of our Societies are Doing.

THE CHELSEA BRANCH of the London Society held a well-attended meeting on January 27th, at 11, Cheyne Walk, by kind permission of Lady Scott-Moncrieff. The chair was taken by Mrs. Alys Russell, and Mrs. Robie Uniacke gave an interesting address on the present suffrage situation. She was followed by Dr. Alice Benham (of Chelsea), who told of her experiences in Russia, where she spent last summer in voluntary work at Stara Chelnoe. She showed some interesting photographs and other souvenirs of her journey, while a collection was taken for the Millicent Fawcett Hospital Units. Mrs. Cecil Hunt, the Hon. Secretary of the Branch, is to be congratulated on having got so many of her members together, and on presenting to them during the afternoon an unusually refreshing report of the work done by the Committee and members since 1914.

CHISWICK AND BEDFORD PARK.—A very successful Drawing Room Meeting took place on January 23rd at 47, Priory-road, Bedford Park, by kind invitation of Mrs. Wolfe, when Miss Ada Moore gave her charming "Song Recital," after which she made an appeal for the Scottish Women's Hospital (London Unit). A collection was made which amounted to £14 5s. In addition to this, our hostess' young daughters contributed £1 8s. 6d., made by the sale of breast knots and neck chains, their own work, and spontaneous offering, making in all £15 13s. 6d. Miss Moore further asked for offers of drawing rooms for similar entertainments, and secured provisional promises of three as far apart as Golder's Green and Putney. The Hon. Secretary announced that a working party for the same object is held weekly in Bedford Park, at which already nearly 200 garments have been made, principally suits of pyjamas, and inviting anyone present to join. Four ladies responded to this.

CAMBRIDGE.—A meeting of members of the Cambridge W.S.A. was held on February 2nd for the discussion of the resolutions to be put before the council, and for instructions to be given to delegates. Mrs. Heitland, from the chair, called attention to the letter which had appeared in *The Times*, over distinguished Cambridge signatures, which expressed the hope that

the Electoral Reform Conference would declare itself at least in favour of the *principle* of women's suffrage. Since then the actual recommendations of the Conference, embodying definite suggestions for a partial franchise for women had been published, and Mrs. Heitland therefore considered the present situation full of hope. The members then discussed the various resolutions with much thoroughness and interest. A resolution in the name of Cambridge on the agenda recommends other societies to adopt what has been our own practice for several years, namely, to have an annual members' meeting for the express purpose of discussing the agenda to be put before the council. This plan keeps members in touch with important developments and enables the society to be carried on on democratic lines. This year we carried our democratic principle still further, and invited opinions from members as to the best recommendations for the central executive. About thirty were present at an enthusiastic meeting.

HOLT (NORFOLK).—A lantern lecture on the work of the S.W.H. for France and Serbia was held in the Shire Hall on January 25th. Miss Waring, who was coming, was prevented at the last minute, but her place was ably filled by Miss Fielden, who gave a most interesting account of the work of the S.W.H. in all the Allied countries. The hall was crowded; the sale of tickets amounted to £4 14s., and donations later on brought it up to £7 15s. Miss Fielden also gave another lantern lecture at Runton (near Cromer), which was very well attended and much appreciated. The financial report of it is not yet to hand, but from all accounts should be quite satisfactory.

SOUTHPORT.—A lantern lecture in aid of the Scottish Women's Hospitals (N.U.W.S.S.) was given in the Cambridge Hall on February 2nd, by Mrs. Shaw Maclaren, who gave a most interesting account of the work of the hospitals in France, Salonika, Macedonia, and Serbia. The Mayor presided, and there was a large and appreciative audience. The collection amounted to about £21, and over £15 was taken for tickets.

WORTHING.—A meeting was held on January 31st at 8, Liverpool-terrace. In Mrs. Thompson's absence, Miss Collyer took the chair, and introduced the speaker (Miss Tynan) who, at very short notice, had come from London in place of Miss Helen Ward. The subject of the address was "The Economical Position of Women as Affected by the War." Miss Tynan spoke of the way in which women of all classes were meeting on a common level of patriotic work, and said that this was one good thing that had come out of the war. Although numbers of women taking men's places realised their responsibility towards them, it was most necessary for the others to realise that it was not truly patriotic to work for low wages, for this would only end in undercutting the men when they returned. Women must learn to organise politically and industrially. They would then be able to force the Government to better their conditions. Women needed to rouse themselves from their apathy. Questions of women's welfare were not questions for one class alone, but for all classes and womanhood at large. Woman suffrage was only a means to an end, and that end not feminism alone, but a larger human understanding.

Forthcoming Meetings.

FEBRUARY 9.

Chester—Haswell's Café, 68, Foregage Street—Speaker: Mrs. Duckworth—Subject: Child Culture—Chairman: Mrs. Crosland Taylor.

Edinburgh—40, Shandwick Place—"At Home"—Speaker: Miss K. M. London—Subject: "The Abbaye du Royaumont." 4.30

Manchester—Engineering Works, Mill Street—Speaker: Miss Edith Place.

FEBRUARY 12.

Birmingham—Combined Meeting, Women's Co-op. Guild and Munition Workers, at Stirchley Institute—Speakers: Miss Geraldine Cooke and Mrs. Ring. 7.30

Birmingham—Yardley's Women's Meeting—Speaker: Miss Geraldine Cooke. 3.15

FEBRUARY 14.

Bristol—Working Party at 40, Park Street. 3.0—5.0

Lambeth Road—Wheatsheaf Hall, Lower Lambeth Road—Women's Liberal Association—Speaker: Miss May Curwen—Subject: Scottish Women's Hospitals. 7.30

South Kensington—At 18, Sheffield Terrace—Annual Meeting—Chairman: Mrs. Lamb—Speakers: Mrs. O. Strachey, on the Present Position of Women's Suffrage, and Miss Frances Sterling. 3.30

FEBRUARY 19.

Ascot—At Ascot Wood Cottage (by kind permission of H.H. The Ranee of Sarawak)—A lecture, followed by a concert, will be given in aid of the Millicent Fawcett Hospital Units—Speakers: Mrs. Alys Russell and Dr. King Atkinson—Admission by ticket. 2.30

FEBRUARY 28.

Worthing—A Meeting in aid of the Scottish Women's Hospitals will take place at the Lecture Hall, Shelley Road—Speaker: Mrs. Shaw McLaren. 3.0

Coming Events.

A Conference will be held in the large Chemistry Theatre, University College, Gower Street, W.C., to discuss the question of the Minimum Salary for Women Graduates who take up clerical work as a profession, on Wednesday, February 14th, at 6 p.m. The chair will be taken by Miss Tuke, Principal of Bedford College. Speakers, Miss Clough and Miss A. M. Florence. Representatives from the Federation of University Women, Association of University Women Teachers, the Association of Headmistresses, Association of Assistant Mistresses, and the National Union of Women Workers will take part in the discussion.

Women's Municipal Party Meetings.

ST. PANCRAS, February 12th.—Drawing-room Meeting; Mrs. Ferguson, 24, Woburn Place. Speakers: Mrs. Percy Boulnois, Hon. Treas., W.M.P.; Miss Ada Crosby, P.L.G.; and Mrs. W. Courtney. Chair: Miss Lidgett, P.L.G.

ISLINGTON, February 26th.—Drawing-room Meeting; Mrs. Luff, 42, Highbury Hill, N. Speaker: Councillor Miss Mary Beeton. Chair: Miss Seymour Bennett.

CENTRAL, March 28th.—Annual Meeting; Sunderland House, Curzon Street, W.

Women's Municipal Party Citizen Association.

ST. PANCRAS, February 13th.—Speaker: Mrs. Bernard Mole: "Maternity and Child Welfare."

ISLINGTON, February 19th.—Speaker: Mrs. Miall-Smith: "Food and the Borough Council."

SOUTH LAMBETH, February 22nd.—Speaker: Miss Hitchcock: "Cinemas."

UPPER NORWOOD, March 1st.—Speaker: Mrs. Bond: "Health in the Home" and "Public Health."

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40	3 0	8 6	16 0

All advertisements should be addressed to The Manager, The Common Cause Publishing Co., Ltd., 14, Great Smith-st., Westminster, and must be received not later than first post Wednesday.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.

NEW CONSTITUTIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE, Park Mansions Arcade, Knightsbridge, S.W. Tuesday next, at 3 o'clock, a lantern slide lecture, "Serbia and the Serbs," by Captain C. B. Norman. Admission, 1s. to this lecture.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FRANCHISE CLUB, 9, Grafton-st., Piccadilly, W. Wednesday, Feb. 14th: "To-day in the Balkans," by Mr. H. W. Nevinson. Chairman, Mr. A. W. Evans.

ADOPTION.

WILL any lady adopt Baby Boy, month old; refined parents.—Box 6,497, COMMON CAUSE Office.

TO PARENTS.

TO PARENTS ABROAD.—Lady is anxious to recommend home for infant; every care offered; healthy district. Terms on application; excellent references given and required.—Box 6,472, COMMON CAUSE Office.

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[Continued on page 584

Continued from page 583

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